

1. Get your guitar(s) set up professionally. No point practicing with shitty strings, high action, etc.
For strings I recommend the ones below, they are easy to bend, but still full sounding.
 - Gibson = Ernie Ball Slinky Cobalt, Gauge is 46, 36, 26, 16, 11, 9.
 - Fender = Fender Pure Nickel, Gauge is 10, 13, 17, 26, 36, 46 (or go even lighter, not heavier)
 - Bass = Ernie Ball Hybrid Slinky, Gauge is 105-45

2. There are twelve notes in an octave, and almost four octaves are covered on a guitar. The table below shows what the notes are popularly called. For example, no one really calls a B flat an A sharp. Stick with these note names when naming keys and chords.

2b. You need to learn where each of these notes is on the low E and A strings (e.g., E flat is 11th fret on low E, and 6th fret on A). Only learn the first 11 frets, as 12 and higher are just repeats of that. These are all the note names on guitar that you need to know. The rest you can figure out (if you need to) using the octave shapes below. For example, if you want to find a G note on the D string. Since you know that there is a G on the 3rd fret of the low E, you use the first octave shape below to find the G on the 5th fret of the D string.

Note Name	Interval Name
C	Root note or tonic
C#	Minor second (<u>not important</u> , ignore)
D	Second (actually a major second, but never called that)
Eb	Minor third
E	Major third
F	Fourth (actually called a perfect fourth...)
F#	Diminished fifth or flat fifth or tritone or augmented fourth
G	Fifth (actually called a perfect fifth...)
G#	Minor sixth
A	Major sixth
Bb	Seventh, or a flat seven, or a dominant seventh
B	Major seventh
C	Octave

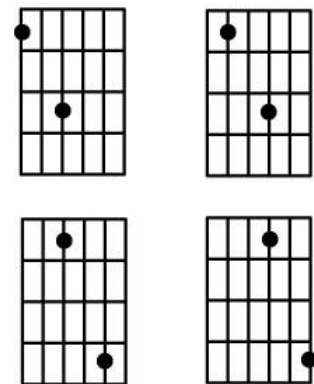


Figure 1: Octave shapes

3. Using C as the root note (this where we get the key name from; key of C has C as a root note), the twelve intervals have the names above. There are twelve notes in a n octave, therefore there are 12 intervals in an octave. Just like you can name twelve notes ascending from C, you can name 12 intervals ascending from the root. For example, from a C to an A is a major sixth. From a C to an Eb is a minor third. If we were using D as the root note, A would be the perfect fifth. If this does not make sense, ask me. Get comfortable with these interval labels now. Eventually you will want to get comfortable with how each interval sounds. For example, a major third is happy and a minor third is sad (<http://www.guitarator.com/audio-interval-quiz#>). For now, learn the labels and the distance between notes that they signify.

4. Each of these intervals has a shape. You should start to become familiar with what each interval looks like. For example, a fifth interval, (starting on C and adding a G) is a power chord, so you know what it looks like (also called a C5 chord). Note: Don't bother with minor seconds, they are never used. Hint, these are all little two note chords (aka doublestops) that you already know. It is useful to start putting a name to them so that when coming up with solo licks you can play around with them.

5. In order to build a scale, eight scale tones are selected from the 12 possible notes (except in the case of pentatonic scales which have 5 [hence “penta”] tones only, more on this later). C major, for example, is made up of a root, second, major third, fourth, fifth, major sixth, and major seventh (C D E F G A B C). This is the scale you play by hitting all the white keys on the piano. It’s the scale the piano was built around. This is the scale (or mode) that happy birthday, and twinkle little star are written in. If we did solos only in this key/mode, chicks would not dig us because we would sound lame. So, if we want to make a cooler sounding scale, we need to swap out some of the eight tones/intervals that make up the scale.

6. The Mixolydian scale, as you can see in the table below, is the same as the C major scale except that it has a b flat instead of a B. This makes it cooler because the major seventh interval is lame and happy sounding (e.g., happy birthday), whereas the dominant, or flat, seventh interval is cool and bluesy sounding (e.g., Sweet Home Alabama). NOTE: for some reason it is called the Mixolydian *MODE* and not the Mixolydian *SCALE*, for our purposes they mean the same thing. It’s the naming as Mixolydian, Major, Dorian, etc. that matters.

7. Here are the most important modes to know and the intervals that make them. There are other modes which have been excluded. For now, these are all you need to know, especially the Dorian and Mixolydian.

Modes (or scales)	Construction	Notes in key of C
Ionian (aka Major)	1--2--3-4--5--6--7-8	C D E F G A B C
Mixolydian	1--2--3-4--5--6-b7--8	C D E F G A B \flat C
Dorian	1--2-b3--4--5--6-b7-8	C D E \flat F G A B \flat C
Aeolian (aka Natural Minor)	1--2-b3--4--5-b6--b7--8	C D E \flat F G A \flat B \flat C
Pentatonic Major	1--2--3---5--6---8	C D E G A C
Pentatonic Minor	1---b3--4--5---b7--8	C E \flat F G B \flat C

7. These modes exist in all 11 keys. There is a D Dorian, and e flat Dorian, an F Dorian, and so on... So, if I show up and want to jam in the key of F Dorian instead of C Dorian, what do you do? You could use the interval formula for the Dorian scale to figure out which notes to play, and then find those notes on the fret board (this is what a classical pianist would do). Or, you could use moveable scale SHAPES.

8. Pretend you no longer know the Aeolian mode and instead use the three diagrams below to solo over songs that are in the appropriate modes (e.g., Sweet Home Alabama is Mixolydian). Most rock music is either Mixolydian (happy, because of the major third, bluesy because of flat seven) or Dorian (sad, because of the minor third, bluesy because of flat seven). For Dorian start with Shape 1 and Shape 4 (which you’ll notice is that same as the Aeolian shape, but with the root in a different location, mindblowing, I know, and a fact you can exploit as you get better). For the Mixolydian, focus on Shape 1 and 4 (shape four is the same as shape 1 for Dorian, weird, I know).

9. Now, here is where it all comes together. In the diagrams below, the R’s are the root notes and each of the other notes is named as an interval in relation to the root note. you should notice that no note names are used. **This is because the intention is that you only use a note name to find out which key you are in and to move your shape to the appropriate place on the neck to begin soloing. Once you start soloing you are thinking only in intervals.** As you become familiar with the flavour of each interval, you can solo so that you land or, highlight, certain intervals in relation to what is being played. This part takes a minute to learn, a lifetime to master. If later down the road you want to learn the note names, so be it. Most people never do (e.g., James Hetfield only knows the first two strings).

10. You always need to know the key and mode you are playing in to correctly use these shapes. As far as determining this, you can Google it, use your ear, ask me. There are theory based ways to do this, but I'll save that for later.

Songs to play with:

Gary Clark Jr. - Bright Lights > Don't Owe You A Thing (Track 1+2 on Bright Lights EP) **A Dorian**, but play lots of A pentatonic licks during Bright Lights to keep it simple and bluesy (they are the same except the Dorian has a second and a sixth) and then more Dorian licks in track 2.

More to follow, I am brain dead right now. There are backtracks on YouTube, just type the keys and mode and fire it up.

That's it for soloing. Here are some additional things to know and work on.

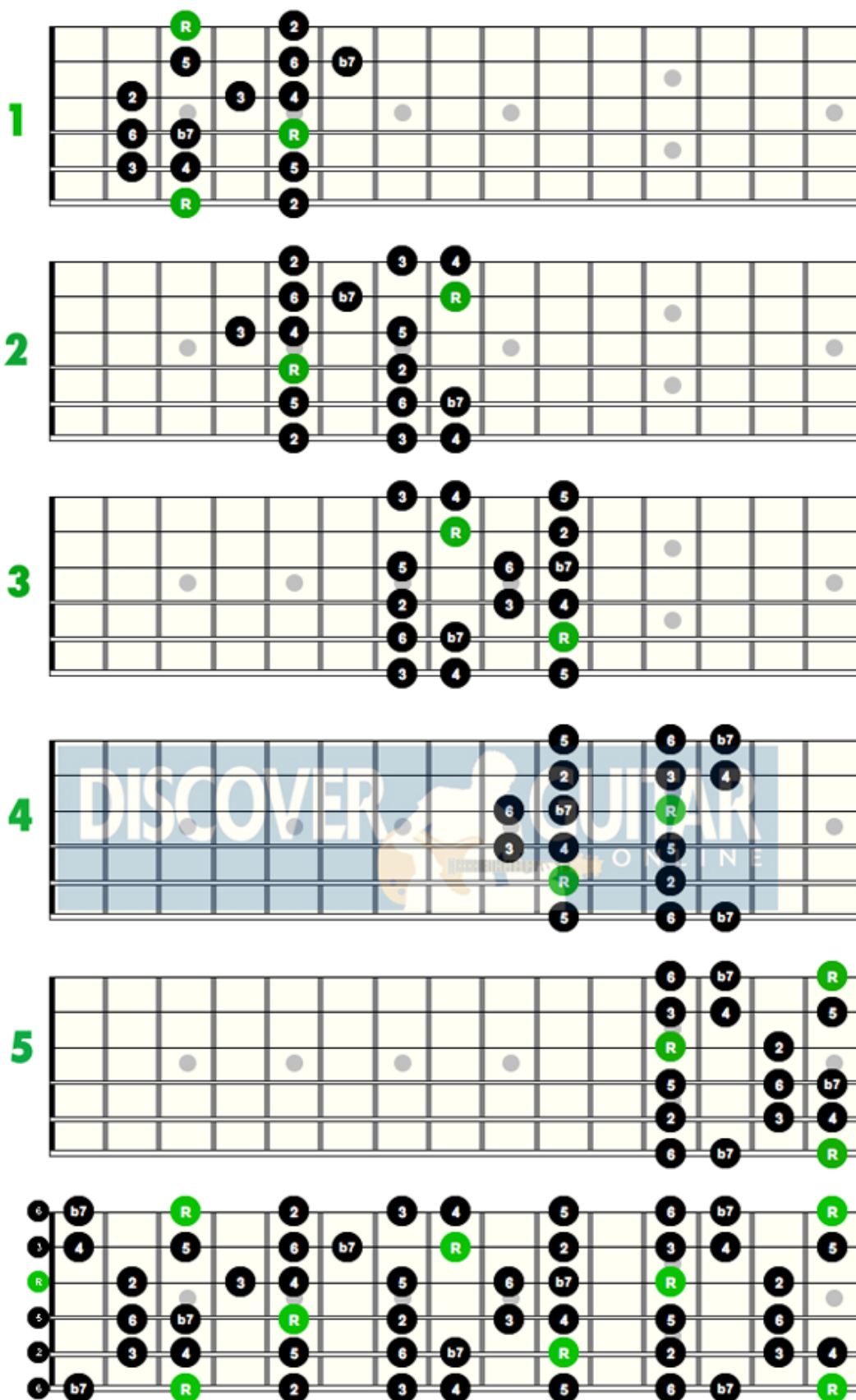
11. As you get ready to play in each different key, locate ALL of the root notes on the guitar before you start playing. This helps so that your scale run/licks end on the right note (usually the root note when starting out). It also makes branching out to common intervals a lot easier. I can explain this in person though as it takes some work.

12. Chords (aka triads) for each key are made by adding a third and a fifth on top of each note in the scale/mode. So for C Mixolydian, the first note is C major (a C with a third (E) and a fifth (G)). The second chord is D minor (D with a third [F] and a fifth [A]). I can explain this in person, but you probably get it.

C D E F G A B \flat C

13. Now, you also use the interval names of a key to call out chord progression. For example, if we are playing blues in C Mixolydian we are going to play three chord in the 12 bar blues pattern: C, F, and G. C is called the ONE chord, F is called the FOUR chord, and G is called the FIVE chord. F is the fourth of the 8 scale tones which make up C Mixolydian, therefore it is called the fourth chord. This progression is called a 1-4-5 and it is what we will play together when we jam next so the other guy can practice his solos.

Mixolydian mode



Dorian mode

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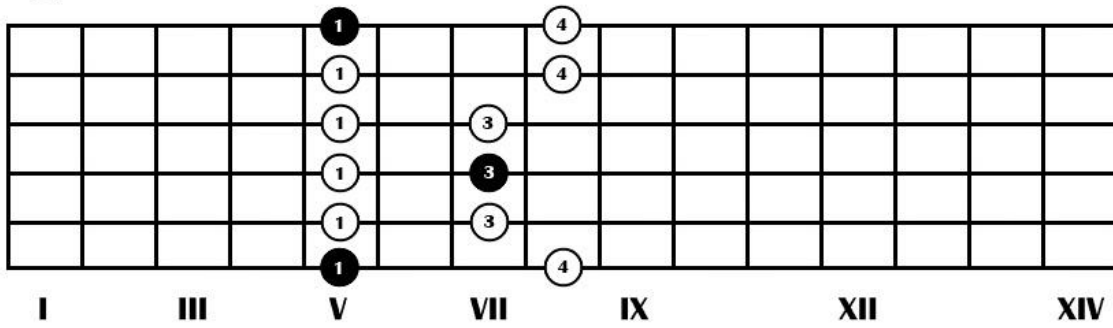
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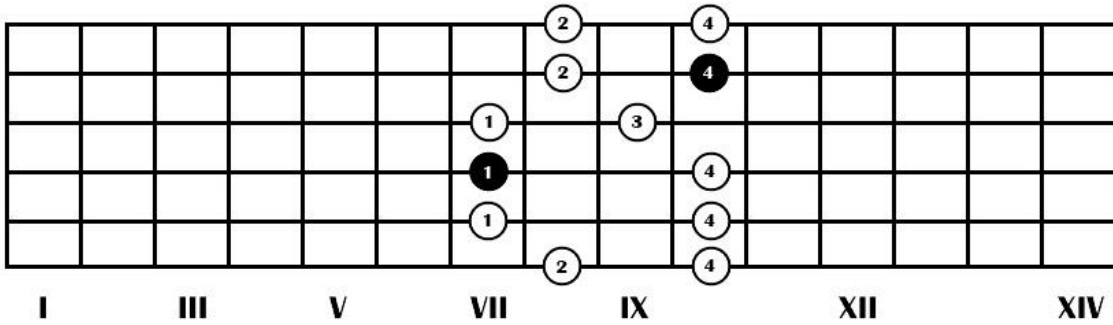
Minor pentatonic scale in A

● = Root

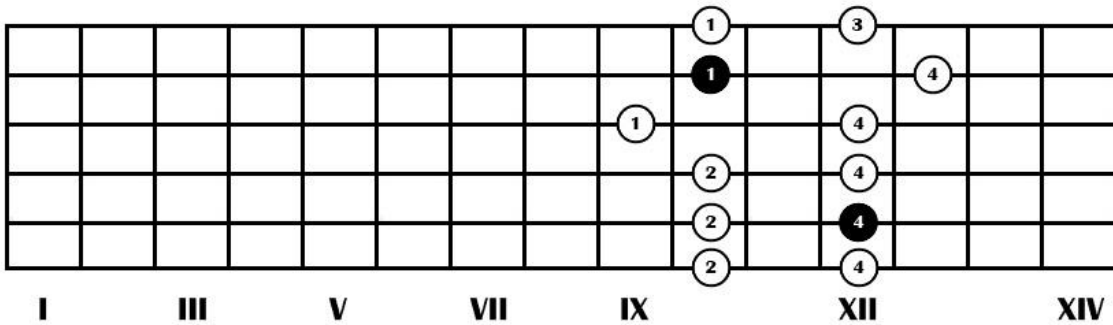
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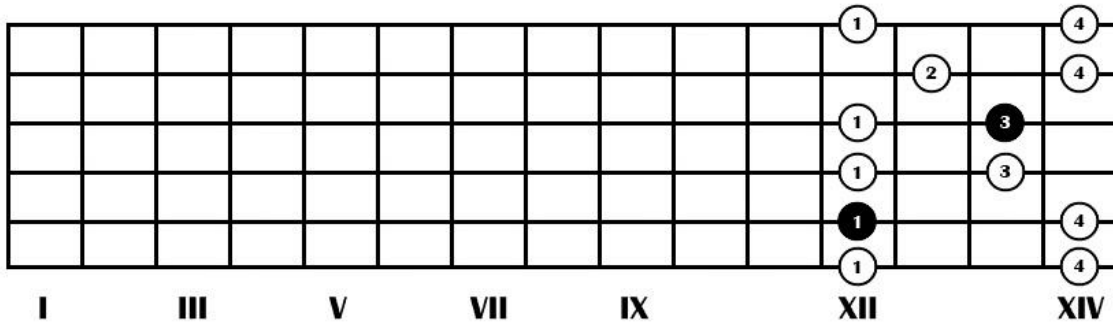
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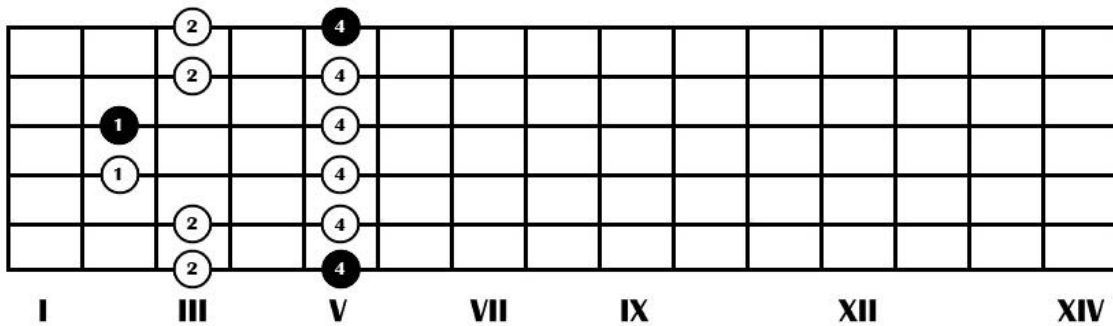
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Same pattern can be played
one octave up, with 1st finger
on 14th fret